

Enfield held by Maskell's penalty save

By MICHAEL KNOX: Wycombe Wands 0, Enfield 0

A DRAMATIC second half penalty save by John Maskell earned Wycombe a point and further dented Enfield's chances of a fourth successive championship, in Saturday's Isthmian League encounter at Loakes Park.

Maskell, recently picked for the league representative squad, became a hero 17 minutes after the break. Referee Mr Bush ruled that Ronnie Howell had been fouled during a dangerous run in front of goal.

Indeed had he shot immediately instead of trying to beat his man, Howell would have scored anyway. Howell admitted after the match that it definitely should not have been a penalty.

However, Mr Bush was adamant and Maskell saw it that justice was done with a low save to his right from Micky O'Sullivan's spot-kick. It was not the best placed of shots but the veteran goalkeeper still reacted quick enough to save the day.

The penalty came in the middle of a spell of sustained pressure by the strong Enfield side — pressure which continued for much of the

last half hour. But the Wycombe defence, thanks to a magnificent performance by Steve Hardwick, held them at bay.

With Barking winning 3-0 at Leytonstone, and so condemning the East London side to Division Two, Enfield now have a giant task to retain the title. Barking need two wins from their final three games for their first ever championship.

But those games could not be tougher — away to Wycombe, Enfield and Dagenham. It's not all over yet.

Wycombe will be pleased with a draw even though it was the first time for seven games that they have dropped home points.

With Steve Long out with a broken nose, Les Reed was brought in to spearhead the attack. But apart from one or two moments Blues rarely looked like breaking through the strongest defence in the league.

Blues' best chance came in the 10th minute following a fine run by Terry Scott on the left. His cross was flicked on at the near post by Hardwick but both Stewart Atkins and Reed had efforts scrambled off the line in a goalmouth melee.

After his promising start Blues could find few openings and it was Enfield who went closest to taking the lead before the break. John Knapman's low shot seemed set to go in at the far post but Maskell dived well to tip it round a post.

Much of the first half was a complete stalemate with Enfield, surprisingly, playing a rather safety first game. Few penetrating runs were made from the midfield. Both teams seemed to prefer the long ball upfield.

Determination

There was a determination and fire about the Wycombe performance and this was exemplified by Dylan Evans, normally a subdued character. But on Saturday he twice got involved in second half flare-ups with Tony Bass and Howell and was lucky that the referee did not take tough action.

In the second half Blues' best effort came from Paul Birdseye, whose left foot drive from 20 yards was tipped over by Terry Moore.

The rest of the game belonged to Enfield and it was here that Hardwick showed his class.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell; P. Birdseye, R. Davies, K. Mead, S. Hardwick, D.

Evans, S. Atkins, M. Hollifield, L. Reed, H. Kennedy, T. Scott. Sub: A. Phillips (not used).

ENFIELD: T. Moore; A. Gibson, J. Tone, A. Jennings, K. Elley, R. Howell, M. O'Sullivan, J. Knapman, A. Bass, N. Glover, S. King. Sub: M. Wright (not used).

Referee: A. N. Bush (Dollis Hill).

BERGER ISTHMIAN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Barking | 39 | 26 | 8 | 5 | 84 | 47 | 86 |
| Slough | 40 | 20 | 11 | 9 | 58 | 40 | 71 |
| Dulwich | 38 | 19 | 13 | 6 | 65 | 34 | 70 |
| Enfield | 34 | 20 | 7 | 7 | 62 | 31 | 67 |
| Dagenham | 36 | 20 | 6 | 10 | 70 | 56 | 66 |
| Wycombe | 37 | 15 | 8 | 10 | 55 | 38 | 55 |
| Croydon | 38 | 18 | 9 | 11 | 55 | 41 | 63 |
| Woking | 37 | 16 | 12 | 9 | 74 | 52 | 60 |
| Sutton | 39 | 16 | 8 | 15 | 57 | 46 | 56 |
| Hendon | 39 | 14 | 13 | 12 | 45 | 42 | 56 |
| Leatnhead | 38 | 15 | 8 | 15 | 49 | 39 | 53 |
| Tooting | 35 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 48 | 50 | 52 |
| Boreham Wd | 39 | 13 | 9 | 7 | 48 | 63 | 48 |
| Hitchin | 40 | 12 | 11 | 17 | 56 | 65 | 47 |
| Walthamstow | 38 | 13 | 6 | 19 | 55 | 65 | 45 |
| Hayes | 40 | 9 | 17 | 14 | 44 | 54 | 44 |
| Tilbury | 39 | 11 | 11 | 17 | 54 | 71 | 44 |
| Oxford | 40 | 12 | 7 | 21 | 48 | 76 | 43 |
| Carshalton | 38 | 9 | 14 | 15 | 43 | 61 | 41 |
| Staines | 39 | 6 | 14 | 19 | 39 | 63 | 32 |
| Leytonstone | 41 | 7 | 7 | 21 | 34 | 75 | 28 |
| Kingston | 41 | 3 | 14 | 24 | 33 | 70 | 23 |

Barking delay

WYCOMBE'S match against Barking scheduled for this Saturday has been put back two days as the Essex club have three members of the Isthmian League representative squad who will be playing the Southern League at Maidstone on Sunday.

Blues will now meet Barking at Loakes Park on Monday, kick-off 7.30 p.m. This is a hectic time for the Blues. They played against Tooting last night, travel to Woking tonight and meet Hungerford in the Berks and Bucks Cup final replay at Slough on Thursday.

BERGER PAINTS YOUTH CUP

Although Wycombe Youth failed to complete their fixtures in this competition they have been assessed on games already played and are one of 16 teams to qualify for the final stages. Tonight they are drawn away to Croydon, kick off 7.30 p.m.



Referee Mr Bush is right on the spot as Enfield defender Tony Jennings brings down Stewart Atkins just outside the penalty area in the first half at Loakes Park on Saturday.